

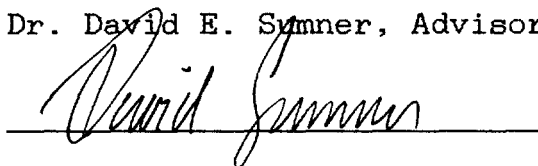
A Proposal for Green Rush,  
an Environmental Magazine for Children

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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### Abstract

This thesis is a proposal for an environmental magazine called Green Rush. The magazine, which targets 8- through 13-year-old children, would serve as a tool to foster an awareness and an appreciation of the environment. The business plan of this thesis includes an explanation of the magazine's concept and editorial need, an evaluation of competing magazines, reader potential, advertising potential, the staff involved and a budget for the first two years of production. Two sample issues of the magazine follow the business plan.

## Business Plan

Green Rush, an environmental magazine for children ages 8 through 13, will help to foster an awareness and an appreciation of the environment. Both teachers and parents can take an active role in helping their students learn about nature, conservation and environmental problems. The magazine will encourage recycling and preservation and will provide activities and tips for children that would make learning fun, and conserving a beneficial habit. Since environmental concerns are increasingly becoming apparent in all areas of life, Green Rush will challenge children to plan and to think for the present and the future. The magazine will contain articles and activities which teachers can use as supplementary material for social studies, science and reading lessons.

Sometimes children's magazines will devote articles, sections, or even entire issues to the environment. However, I could not find a magazine focusing on the environment with a target audience of 8- to 13-year-old children. The closest competition is The Dolphin Log, but this magazine which The Cousteau Society offers is limited to content about the water environment. Other children's magazines which may have some environmental features are Boys' Life, Chickadee Magazine, Highlights for Children, Kid City, Odyssey, Ranger Rick and 3-2-1 Contact.

Boys' Life is a monthly magazine covering activities of interest to boys ages 8 through 18. Most of the readers are boy scouts or cub scouts, and the magazine has a circulation of 1.4 million.

Chicadee Magazine, for children ages 4 through 9, has a circulation of 110,000. Its aim is to interest young children in the world around them in an entertaining and lively way.

With a circulation of 110,000, The Dolphin Log covers marine biology, ecology, environment, natural history and other areas pertaining to water. This bimonthly magazine for 7- to 15-year-old children is offered by The Cousteau Society.

Highlights for Children is published 11 times per year for children ages 2 through 12 and has a circulation of 2.8 million. It contains articles on science, technology, nature, sports and activities.

With a circulation of 275,000, Kid City is published 10 times per year. It is a humor/reading/activity magazine for children ages 6 through 10 years old.

Odyssey is a monthly magazine with a circulation of 86,000, emphasizing astronomy and outer space for 8 to 12 year olds.

Published by the National Wildlife Federation, Ranger Rick is a monthly magazine for children ages 6 through 12. This magazine's focus is on wildlife.

3-2-1 Contact is published 10 times per year covering science and technology for children ages 8 through 14. It has a circulation of 400,000.

Green Rush will help children understand the concerns and problems of the environment while encouraging them to appreciate their surroundings and become involved in conservation efforts. The magazine will help to foster an awareness and an appreciation of the environment. Teachers can build lessons around each issue.

Possible themes for Green Rush, the children's environmental magazine, include an issue about the process and importance of recycling. Another theme is environmental and energy conservation. One issue will focus on wildlife. Another will focus on pollution.

One feature that will appear bimonthly is a profile of a person who is involved in environmental work or concerns. Teachers can build this feature into their social studies lessons.

Another feature that will appear bimonthly is an article about technology advancements. Teachers can use this feature as part of their science lessons.

Children tend to have short attention spans, and so one article will consist of a short list of "quick facts"--statistics related to the theme of the month.

A crossword puzzle with words from the month's issue will help children develop their vocabularies in the area of the theme, and teachers can create reading lessons from this section.

Each issue will have some kind of a maze, puzzle or other brain teaser for students to enjoy.

Students can write letters to the editor who will answer their questions about the environment. Other letters included in this section could be from students who tell about problems or efforts related to the environment occurring in their neighborhoods.

Each issue will include at least one activity that students can do to help foster an understanding and appreciation of the environment. Children in grades three through seven often learn

by doing, and so one article will be a hands-on activity for students to learn about the environment. One possibility for an issue on recycling, for example, would have the children create their own landfills to find out what happens to trash after it is disposed. Students take some kind of trash and put it in their model landfill. In one example, students can take "biodegradable" bags and see if they really decompose. They can put food in the bags and see what happens to the food. In addition, they can use different bags, such as paper and plastic, and compare the outcomes. Seven weeks or so later, students dig up their landfills and examine the results. They will discover that items such as tin, aluminum and glass do not break down, along with some kinds of paper. Researchers have found hot dogs after 20 years that looked just like they did when they were put in the ground. This landfill activity shows how important recycling becomes as landfills pile up all over the country.

Green Rush will cover features in areas such as weather, wildlife, conservation and the environment. Some proposed topics include acid rain, pollution, endangered species, recycling, insecticides, habitat destruction and government projects. Teachers will be able to use at least one feature of every issue as a science lesson.

The target audience of Green Rush includes children in third through seventh grade. The majority of the subscription holders would be the schools. Teachers could order enough copies for all the students in their class and would find incorporating the magazine into their lesson plans beneficial. The environment is increasingly becoming more of a topic of discussion in the

classroom and at home, and thus, a magazine specifically covering the environment would challenge students to plan and to think for the present and the future. Teachers who order large numbers of subscriptions through their schools for use in their classrooms will also have the chance every month to receive bulletin board posters, videos and extended lesson plans related to the theme of the month. Such an offer would attract teachers because it would add creativity to their lessons and would help stimulate the students' desire to learn about the environment. Also, Green Rush will allow parents the chance to provide their children with a magazine encouraging them to become active participants in the environmental cause while learning about the world at the same time.

Green Rush has a wide offering of possible advertisers. Products advertised in the magazine could include food, clothing, games, toys and other products for children. Willy Wonka candy, Nintendo games and Nike gym shoes are some specific examples of advertisers of magazines targeted toward the same age group of children. Since the parents who purchase the subscriptions and single-copy issues sold outside of schools have an interest in their children's learning and in the environment, the magazine will also appeal to them. Parents buy the food, games and toys for their children, and so the advertisements would influence them to purchase more products. As they may sometimes page through the magazine and help their children, they notice the advertisements which can affect their buying. Each teacher's supplemental lesson plan could also contain advertising for additional supplies such as videos, bulletin board pictures and

messages, computer programs, book offers and other supplementary materials.

For at least the first two years, the staff of Green Rush would include four main members. I will be in charge of the editing. I will edit articles and work with the freelance writers. The art director will design the layouts, guide the freelance photographers and manage the production phase of the magazine through working with the printer. The third employee will sell advertising space. The main function of the fourth employee, the circulation director, will be to build the subscriptions. The circulation director will work with brokers to obtain lists and will write the direct mail letters. The sample masthead of the proposed magazine shows future staff employees as the magazine expands and increases in advertising and subscription and single-copy sales. For the first two years, the magazine will rely on an outside accountant to do the payroll work and auditing. However, eventually the staff will include an accountant to take care of such business management.



EXPENSES:	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
Salaries:		
Editor	\$20,000	\$20,000
Circulation Manager	\$20,000	\$20,000
Advertising Director	\$20,000	\$20,000
Designer/Production Director	\$20,000	\$20,000
Health insurance costs	\$16,000	\$16,000
Freelance writers	\$6,000	\$6,000
Freelance photographers	\$750	\$750
Office rent \$500 per month	\$6,000	\$6,000
Equipment	\$4,525	\$0
Electricity/heating	\$60	\$60
Telephone	\$115	\$115
Paper and other office supplies	\$150	\$150
Printing cost (magazine)	\$205,500	\$280,300
Post office	\$205,200	\$279,900
Fulfillment costs	\$20,000	\$20,000
Labels	\$11,050	\$15,100
Direct mail promotion	\$200,000	\$60,000
Other advertising and promotion	\$200,000	\$275,000
Travel	\$6,000	\$6,000
<u>Professional Services</u>	<u>\$2,000</u>	<u>\$1,500</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$963,350	\$1,046,875

REVENUE:		
Circulation (single copy)	\$3,000	\$4,000
Circulation (subscriptions to schools)	\$1,100,000	\$1,512,500
Circulation (subscriptions to individual homes)	\$210,000	\$270,000
Advertising	\$600,000	\$600,000
<u>Ancillary products/services</u>	<u>\$40,000</u>	<u>\$40,000</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,953,000	\$2,426,500

EXPENSES AND REVENUES ARE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING BASIC ASSUMPTIONS:

Circulation (single copy)	1,500	2,000
Circulation (subscriptions to schools)	100,000	137,500
Circulation (subscriptions to individual homes)	10,500	13,500
Single-copy price	\$2	\$2
Nine-month subscription price for schools which buy more than 20 copies per month	\$11	\$11
12-month subscription price to individual homes	\$20	\$20
Frequency of magazine per year	monthly	monthly
Number of direct mail promotion letters to teachers (each letter would reach a teacher who would potentially order enough for the class, an average of 25 copies)	150,000	50,000
Number of direct mail promotion letters to parents and children	350,000	100,000

Direct mail response rate	3%	3%
Advertising cost (color)	\$10,000	\$10,000
Advertising cost (black & white)	\$7,000	\$7,000
Average number of advertising pages	5	5
Percent advertising pages	20%	20%
PROFIT:	\$989,650	\$1,379,625

For the first two years of the magazine, the employees will earn \$20,000 each. Salaries will increase after the second year. The cost of health insurance is estimated to be 20 percent of the total salaries. An average of three articles per issue will be freelance-written. The writers will receive \$150 for each of these. In addition, the magazine will accept one activity article from a teacher for every issue for \$50 each.

The costs of the equipment is as follows: computer, \$1,100; software, \$500; printer, \$1,000; typewriter, \$100; photocopy machine, \$1,000; fax machine, \$400; light table, \$100; lamps, \$100; desks, \$150; chairs, \$75. Whenever possible, such as with the desks and other furniture, we will buy used items such as those sold at garage sales to save money.

The printing cost for the first year is for 1,027,500 copies, which includes school subscriptions, home subscriptions and single copies. For the second year, the cost is for 1,401,500 copies. Each 24-page issue printed on recycled paper would about cost 20 cents. Postage would cost 20 cents per issue. The direct mail promotion cost is based on 40 cents per mailing. A direct mailing to one teacher, however, could potentially yield an average of 25 subscriptions, or one for each student. In the first year, direct mail letters would be sent to 150,000 teachers. With a 3 percent response rate, about 4,500 teachers would each order an average of 25 subscriptions. Other

advertising and promotion costs include the supplementary materials for teachers, an average of \$50 each per year, such as computer programs, videos, and posters. Each month an employee would attend a conference or travel to promote the magazine. Travel expenses would average \$500 per trip. Professional services include \$500 for a lawyer to incorporate the magazine. The rest of the service expenses is for auditing, bookkeeping and the occasional use of a lawyer.

The single-copy and subscription circulation figures are based on projections of how many parents and teachers would buy Green Rush for their students. Since schools would purchase large quantities of subscriptions, we would charge them a reduced rate. Therefore, the revenue from the subscriptions would only be about \$1,100,000 the first year, instead of the \$2,000,000 revenue for full-price subscriptions. Direct mail promotion to one teacher would cost 40 cents. However, on the average, a school would buy subscriptions for 25 students. If each of these subscriptions was obtained from a separate direct mail letter, it would cost \$10 (or 40 cents X 25). Therefore, if the discount for buying bulk subscriptions is less than \$9.60 (\$10 for 25 direct mail letters - 40 cents for one direct mail letter), the method of sending the direct mail to teachers will save money.

Magazines and other forms of media do not contain many advertisements when the target is children as opposed to adults. Since not many ads will appear in Green Rush, therefore, the cost will be on the high end of the advertising scale for new magazines. Ancillary products and services include supplementary materials for teachers offered through the magazine.

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